Visa-on-Arrival to Indians by Sri Lanka

5320. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a decision to unilaterally give Indian passport holders visa-on-arrival in the Island is likely to be announced by the Sri Lankan Government;

(b) if so, whether Sri Lankan is issuing visas on arrival even without insisting on reciprocity on India's part;

(c) whether Sri Lanka has pointed out that India should have no objection to Sri Lankan's unilateral action as India is bent on improving trade and investment relations with Sri Lanka; and

(d) if so, to what extent India has welcomed this move?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (d) Government of Sri Lanka in January, 2002 announced that any person who is a bonafide tourist and who is a citizen of India shall be exempt from the requirement of possessing a visa for entry into and stay in Sri Lanka for a period not exceeding one month if such person is in possession of a valid passport and where so required by the law of the country to which he is ultimately bound, a visa authorising his entry into that country. This is a unilateral decision by the Government of Sri Lanka. All Sri Lankan nationals visiting India must have appropriate visas stamped on their passports before arrival in India.

Assistance for agricultural institutions in Afghanistan

5321. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to assist Afghanistan on rebuilding the agricultural institutions damaged seriously;

(b) if so, the assistance proposed; and

(c) the action taken in this regard?